
DIGEST

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Ellington

HB No. 591

Abstract: Clarifies the meaning of the phrase "gathering held in conjunction with" for the purposes of ethics laws relative to limitations on food, drink, and refreshment and for expenditures relative to those gatherings in lobbyist disclosure laws.

Present law (R.S. 42:1115.1) prohibits a person from whom a public servant or public employee is prohibited by present law (R.S. 42:1111 and 1115) from receiving a thing of economic value from giving to such a public servant or public employee any food, drink, or refreshment the total value of which exceeds \$50 for a single event at which food, drink, or refreshment is given.

Present law specifies that the limit does not apply to a gathering held in conjunction with a meeting related to a national or regional organization or a meeting of a statewide organization of governmental officials or employees.

Proposed law clarifies that "gathering held in conjunction with a meeting related to a national or regional organization or a meeting of a statewide organization of governmental officials or employees" includes both an event held during the same time period and in the same general locale as a meeting of such an organization and to which some persons associated with the organization are invited and an event that is part of the scheduled activities at a meeting of such an organization and open to persons attending the meeting.

Present law, relative to lobbying of the legislative branch and relative to lobbying of the executive branch, requires certain expenditure reports. Present law exempts from legislative lobbying laws any expenditure for any reception or social gathering sponsored in whole or in part by a lobbyist or on behalf of a principal he represents held in conjunction with a meeting of a national or regional organization of legislators or legislative staff and provides a similar exemption in the executive branch lobbying laws for similar events held in conjunction with a meeting of a national or regional organization of executive branch officials.

Proposed law clarifies that for the purposes of those lobbyist disclosure laws, the exemption includes any expenditure for a single activity, occasion, reception, meal, or meeting held during the same time period and in the same general locale as a meeting of a national or regional organization to which some persons associated with the organization are invited or that is part of the scheduled activities at a meeting of such an organization and open to persons attending the meeting.

Proposed law declares the provisions to be remedial, curative, interpretive, and procedural and therefore are to be applied retroactively as well as prospectively.

Effective upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Amends R.S. 24:55(E)(2), R.S. 42:1115.1(F), and R.S. 49:76(E)(2))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on House and Governmental Affairs
to the original bill.

1. In the proposed clarification relative to lobbyist disclosure provisions, rather than providing for the meaning "in conjunction with", provides instead for the inclusion of specific expenditures in the exemption.